

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PRS-01  
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /048 W  
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R 180919Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4884

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 00906

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: OVIP (BIEDENKOPF, DR. KURT), GW  
SUBJECT: VISIT OF KURT BIEDENKOPF TO WASHINGTON FEB 2-9

REF: (A) BONN 341, (B) CASAGRANDE-BACHE TELCON

1. FOLLOWING IS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE  
USEFUL IN CONNECTION WITH SETTING UP APPOINTMENTS FOR  
BIEDENKOPF.

2. BIEDENKOPF, 49 YEARS OLD, IS A FIGURE WITH A  
NATIONAL REPUTATION AND WITH NATIONAL INFLUENCE IN THE  
CDU/CSU OPPOSITION. HAVING ENTERED POLITICS AT A TOP  
LEVEL IN THE CDU SEVERAL YEARS AGO AFTER A METEORIC  
CAREER AS A UNIVERSITY RECTOR (BOCHUM) AND INDUSTRIAL  
MANAGER (HENKEL), BIEDENKOPF BECAME THE PARTY'S GENERAL  
SECRETARY IN 1973. HE PLAYED A LARGE PART IN QUARTER-  
BACKING THE OPPOSITION'S 1976 FEDERAL CAMPAIGN, WHICH  
FAILED TO SECURE THE GOVERNMENT BUT POLLED NEARLY 49  
PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTES. BIEDENKOPF RESIGNED AS  
GENERAL-SECRETARY IN THE SPRING OF 1977 FOLLOWING A  
FALLING-OUT WITH KOHL AND PUBLIC CRITICISM OF FRANZ-  
JOSEPH STRAUSS BY BIEDENKOPF. HE PROMPTLY FOUND A NEW  
POWER BASE, HOWEVER, AS CDU CHAIRMAN OF WESTPHALIA (OR,  
WESTPHALIA-LIPPE), ONE OF THE FRG'S TWO LEADING CDU  
DISTRICTS (THE OTHER IS RHEINLAND) WITH SEVERAL MILLION  
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CONSTITUENTS.

3. BIEDENKOPF, WHO REMAINS A BUNDESTAG DEPUTY, HAS  
STAYED IN THE LIMELIGHT IN RECENT MONTHS AS ONE OF THE  
OPPOSITION'S LEADING SPOKESMEN AND AS A PROTOTYPICAL  
POLITICIAN-INTELLECTUAL. HE HAS MENDED SOME OF HIS  
BRIDGES WITH STRAUSS AND OTHERS ON THE OPPOSITION'S

RIGHT BY CRITICISING ASPECTS OF CDU/CSU POLICY AS TOO  
STATIST AND TOO LITTLE ORIENTED TOWARD THE FREE MARKET  
AND THE VIRTUES OF RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM, AND BY PAYING  
OCCASIONAL HOMAGE TO STRAUSS IN BAVARIA. AT THE SAME  
TIME, HE HAS KEPT HIS CREDENTIALS AS A LIBERAL IN THE  
CONSERVATIVES CAMP BY CRITICISING OVERZEALOUS REMARKS  
FROM CDU HEADQUARTERS AIMED AGAINST GERMAN INTELLECTUALS  
ACCUSED OF BEING "TERRORIST SYMPATHIZERS."

4. BIEDENKOPF HAS STAKED OUT A POSITION FOR HIMSELF AS  
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE MODERATE KOHL AND THE OPPOSITION'S  
RIGHT WING, CALCULATING THAT SUCH A POSITION, PLUS HIS  
CONTINUING PROMINENCE, PLUS HIS POWER BASE IN WESTPHALIA  
WILL ASSURE HIM OF A VOICE IN OPPOSITION'S STRATEGY AND A  
PROMINENT POSITION IN ANY FUTURE CDU/CSU GOVERNMENT.

5. BIEDENKOPF IS ALSO HEAD OF HIS OWN BONN-BASED  
"INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY" (INCORRECTLY  
CITED AS INSTITUTE FOR SCIENCE AND POLITICS IN REFTEL),  
WHICH HAS A STAFF OF SEVERAL RESEARCHERS AND WHICH  
FUNCTIONS INTER ALIA AS BIEDENKOPF'S PRIVATE THINK TANK.

6. FROM WASHINGTON'S STANDPOINT, IT IS WORTH BEARING IN  
MIND THAT BIEDENKOPF WILL REMAIN ON THE GERMAN POLITICAL  
SCENE FOR YEARS TO COME, IS A LIKELY MINISTER IN SOME  
FUTURE GOVERNMENT, AND CANNOT BE DISMISSED AS A FUTURE  
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CANDIDATE FOR CHANCELLOR.  
STOESSEL

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Subject:** VISIT OF KURT BIEDENKOPF TO WASHINGTON FEB 2-9  
**TAGS:** OVIP, GE, (BIEDENKOPF, KURT)  
**To:** STATE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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